

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS MEETING
WILLIAM J. MYERS SOCCER PAVILION
4300 WEST BAY AVENUE (21225)
WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2004

President Tracy Gosson called the meeting to order at 8:50 a.m.

PRESENT

Tracy Gosson, President, Board of Recreation & Parks
Dean Harrison, Commissioner, Board of Recreation & Parks
Fred Hopkins, Commissioner, Board of Recreation & Parks
Sam Rodriguez, Commissioner, Board of Recreation & Parks
Betty Woods, Secretary, Board of Recreation & Parks
Kimberley Flowers, Director, Department of Recreation & Parks
Connie Brown, Associate Director of Parks, Department of Recreation & Parks
Roslyn Johnson, Associate Director of Recreation, Department of Recreation
& Parks
Gennady Schwartz, Chief, Capital Development, Department of Recreation
& Parks
Ericka Blount, Acting P.I.O., Department of Recreation & Parks
Yolanda Jiggetts, Director's Special Assistant, Department of Recreation & Parks
Darryl Railey, Aquatics Coordinator, Department of Recreation & Parks

ABSENT

Martin Knott, Commissioner, Board of Recreation & Parks
Wendell Rawlings, Commissioner, Board of Recreation & Parks
Carolyn Wainwright, Commissioner, Board of Recreation & Parks

MATERIAL DISTRIBUTION TO THE BOARD – Mrs. Flowers gave each Board Member a binder in which there were sections for Minutes, Division Goals, Organizational Charts, Division Updates, maps indicating locations of all Departmental facilities (including parks), and other informative data. The Board was most appreciative.

AQUATIC PRESENTATION – Mr. Railey first presented an impressive pictorial display of the various activities that are conducted by the Aquatics Division.

He followed this by acquainting the Board with the following information:

- There are 13 Walk-to Pools, 6 Park Pools and 3 Indoor Pools
- Prices are: Park Pools - \$1.50 per admission/\$25.00 per season; Walk-to Pools - \$1.00 per admission, \$10.00 per season; Learn to Swim - \$5.00 for 8 hours instruction; and rental of a Park Pool - \$450.00 (for birthdays and other special events).
- Patronage ranges from the very young to senior citizens, for whom there is an excellent water aerobics program at the Callowhill Indoor Pool.
- Lifeguard coverage is as follows: one for 1-30 children; 2 for 30-100 participants.
- Police presence is based on pool volume and location.
- Other activities are offered, i.e.: a flea market at Cherry Hill; a summer camp at Callowhill, to mention a few.
- Maintenance problems are reported to General Services.
- Indoor pools are open all year long, except for designated times when maintenance must be conducted.
- Lifeguards and attendants are given CPR and Red Cross training to prepare them for emergencies.

Mr. Railey was pleased to report that there have been no serious incidents at any of the pools. Chain link fences have been replaced with wrought iron fences, and that greatly curtails break-ins after hours, which had been a major problem over the years, culminating in a drowning at the Patterson Park Pool two years ago. A group of teenagers cut through the chain link fence, and tragically, one of them drowned. Signs are also very visible stating pool hours, and regarding unauthorized entries. Safety is the Department's ever present concern.

A major problem confronting the Aquatics Division lies in the fact that the counties pay a higher hourly wage than the City does. Recruitment is another issue even though notices are distributed to schools, colleges, community events, newspapers, etc. Mr. Railey feels that if some specific incentives were offered to prospective pool applicants, the number could be increased.

National media attention was recently on our Aquatics program, since it was discovered that Michael Phelps has swum at the Callowhill Indoor Pool on occasion. Matt Lauer, TV personality, interviewed Portia Harris for the Today show, and it was featured on Tom Brokaw's Nightly News.

In this same regard, President Gosson stated that there are many athletic stars living in the area who could be an asset in bringing recognition not only to our Aquatics Division, but to other divisions, as well. Of course, if Michael Phelps could be involved, that would be excellent. She also mentioned Dorothy Hamill (skating) , Ray Lewis (football) and Pam Shriver (tennis). President Gosson suggested that these ideas be followed up. Everyone was enthusiastic about this concept and feels it holds great possibilities.

Mr. Railey was then thanked for coming and sharing so much information with everyone.

POLICY RE: NAMING PARK PROPERTY – Mrs. Flowers distributed copies of the newest draft for this policy, one which tried to pull out the strengths of the draft submitted by former Commissioner Henry Hopkins, and the policy developed by the Maryland Capital Parks and Planning. She then went over each item with the Board.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Board had several questions. One was how to deal with maintenance costs, either up front finances or money held in escrow...something to show that money is there to be tapped for 2 or 3 years. Another issue was the evidence of community support that should be presented, such as documentation from community organizations. Another suggestion was regarding putting up public notices, and that entails more extensive publicity for the Park Board meetings and the agendas involved. President Gosson strongly emphasized that making the public aware of these issues makes the Board's mission to help facilitate what the Department and the public needs more meaningful

Mrs. Flowers will see that these issues are incorporated into the revised policy, and it is hoped that the Board can vote on it at their next meeting on August 25th.

"TOUR" DISCUSSION – The Board was highly impressed with their informal tour of various facilities and parks that was conducted on Wednesday, July 21. They saw leadership in action and how much can be accomplished when that leadership taps into whatever resources are available. The Board also appreciated being able to see, first-hand, the day to day operations at each location, and many felt this type of tour should be done on a regular basis.

Mrs. Flowers also mentioned that each Center has an Advisory Board , and they help to advise the Director, facilitate programming and are actively involved with the Center's operation.

DEVELOPMENT OF BOARD'S INPUT- President Gosson asked what would be the best means to put each Board member's ideas, talents and resources into action. One idea was that Mrs. Flowers plan an individual luncheon with each member so that both can explore their priorities and ideas.

Mrs. Flowers assured everyone that they served a great purpose in being an official voice where the public can come and present their concerns. There is a great public need for everyone as an entity.

Many Board members requested a copy of the revised City Charter's delineation of the Board's duties, per se. Mrs. Flowers said she would make sure they would have a copy of it.

BOARD'S APPEARANCES AT DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS - In a further effort to make the Board more visible, President Gosson expressed her wish that the Board be notified of important monthly functions at which Board representation can be present and, when possible, part of the program. She referred to her recent attendance at the Parks and People celebration when she represented the Department in the absence of Mrs. Flowers. As a consequence, the Board members have all agreed that they will all make every effort to adjust their schedules when occasions arise, and everyone welcomes the idea of not just attending, but is willing to be a part of the program involved. President Gosson said if the invitation is extended, there will be Board representation. Mrs. Flowers was very glad to know this, and said she will make sure that the Board is duly informed.

ALTERNATE MEETING TIMES – President Gosson reiterated an idea that was brought up at the July Park Board meeting, and that was to alternate between morning and evening meeting times. For instance, this morning's meeting was scheduled for 8:30 a.m., next month's meeting will be 5:30 p.m., the following meeting will be at 8:30 a.m., and so forth and so on.

MEETING DATES – To address those meeting dates that fall too close to holidays, it was decided that November's Board meeting will be held on November 17, at 8:30 a.m., and December's meeting will be held on December 15, at 5:30 p.m. A revised Park Board Meeting Schedule will be forthcoming within the next week.

MEETING LOCATION & MINUTES – Mrs. Flowers assured the Board that the location for the next meeting and the Minutes for this meeting will be emailed to them by next week.

BELIEVE IN OUR SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN – Ms. Jiggetts informed the Board that the Department is involved with this campaign and has 5 schools in total, and is the sponsoring agency for two. Full information will be sent to the Board so that they will have the dates, and hopefully, encourage volunteers to come out. The time involved is from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

EMAIL CURTAILMENT – President Gosson requested that when emailing her, please combine several subjects in one communication. She receives an abundance of email each day and reading each one individually can be very time consuming.

NEXT MEETING – The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 25, at 5:30 p.m...location to be announced.

ADJOURNMENT – President Gosson adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Betty M. Woods, Secretary to the Board